KING COMICS

THE PHANTOM

12¢

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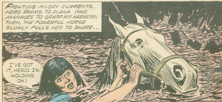
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HAVING DECIDED TO PAY THE PHANTOM A SURPRISE VISIT, DIANA PALMER CROSSES A CRUDE ROPE BRIDGE OVER A RAGING RIVER...


SUDDENLY...
YIII!


NEAR THE RIVER, HERO HAS BEEN GRAZING ALONE... HIS SENSITIVE EARS PICK UP THE SOUND OF DIANA'S SCREAMS...




FIGHTING ANGRY CURRENTS, HERO SWIMS TO DIANA WHO MANAGES TO GRASP HIS HARNESS! THEN, THE POWERFUL HORSE SLOWLY PULLS HER TO SHORE...
I'VE GOT IT, HERO! I'M HOLDING ON!

LATER, IN THE DEEP WOODS...
HE SAVED MY *LIFE!*
THERE IS NO HORSE IN THE WORLD LIKE HERO! HE IS A BRAVE AND GALLANT FRIEND!
YOU NEVER TOLD ME... HOW WERE YOU LUCKY ENOUGH TO FIND A HORSE LIKE *HERO?*
IT'S QUITE A STORY, DIANA! IT GOES BACK TO THE TIME WHEN I FIRST BECAME PHANTOM!
"YEARS AGO, TWO EVIL MEN TRAVELED TOWARD THE KINGDOM OF KABORA WITH ONE PURPOSE... TO *KIDNAP* THE DAUGHTER OF KING SUROBI!
THERE IT IS! SUROBI'S PALACE! JUST AS THE MAP SAYS...THE JUNGLE ON ONE SIDE AND DESERT ON THE OTHER!
HE'S VERY WEALTHY! HE'LL PAY *ANY* RANSOM WE ASK!
YEAH! BUT FIRST, WE'VE GOT TO GET HIS DAUGHTER! I HEAR HE HAS *VICIOUS DOGS* GUARDING THE PLACE!
IT'LL TAKE MORE'N A PACK OF DOGS TO OUT-SMART NEWT LESTER!
WHY DO YOU THINK I BROUGHT ALL THIS *RAW MEAT?* THEY WON'T PAY *US* ANY ATTENTION WHEN THEY SEE THIS!


THAT NIGHT, THE KIDNAPPERS BEGIN TO EXECUTE THEIR PLAN...
OKAY, HOUNDS! HAVE A FEAST! COMPLIMENTS OF NEWT LESTER!


THEY KNOW THE LAYOUT OF THE PALACE...
THAT OUGHTA KEEP THEM QUIET FOR A LONG TIME!


...AND SOON FIND THEIR WAY TO THE GIRL'S ROOM...
WH-WHO'S THERE?


NEWT! QUICK! SOMEONE'S COMING!
COME ON, SWEETHEART! WE'RE GOING ON A NICE LONG TRIP!


MELONIE? WHAT'S THE MATTER...
UHHH!


WITH PERFECT TIMING, THE KIDNAPPERS MAKE THEIR ESCAPE, WHILE THE REST OF THE PALACE SLEEPS...
HURRY! HURRY! THAT MEAT WON'T LAST FOREVER!


SWIFTLY, THEY DRIVE DEEP INTO THE JUNGLE...


MILES AWAY FROM THE PALACE, THEY FEEL SAFE ENOUGH TO MAKE CAMP...
I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TIME TO PACK, SO I BOUGHT YOU THESE CLOTHES! LIKE 'EM?
I HATE THEM!


JUST LIKE ALL WOMEN... NEVER SATISFIED! FIX US SOME GRUB!


WHAT'RE YA PUSHING HER AROUND FOR?
LISTEN... AS LONG AS SHE'S WITH US, SHE'S GOTTA EARN HER KEEP!

THE NEXT DAY THEY CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY...
WHEN WE GET BACK TO THE CITY, I'LL SEND A **RANSOM NOTE** TO **KING SUROBI!**
I'LL BE **GLAD** TO GET BACK TO **CIVILIZATION!** THIS JUNGLE GIVES ME THE CREEPS!

BUT THE JUNGLE HAS STRANGE WAYS OF DEALING WITH EVIL...
I CAN'T SEE A FOOT IN FRONT OF ME!

STUCK! WE'LL **NEVER** GET IT OUT!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

FROM HERE ON, WE GO ON FOOT! GET THE GEAR!
ON FOOT? IN THIS **JUNGLE?**

THERE'S A RIVER NOT FAR FROM HERE! MEBBE WE CAN SWIPE A CANOE!

SLOWLY, THE TRIO MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE JUNGLE. THEY DON'T KNOW IT, BUT THEY ARE ENTERING BENGALI COUNTRY, AND SILENT EYES ARE WATCHING...



SOON, JUNGLE DRUMS BEGIN TO SPEAK TO THE PHANTOM...



THEY REACH THE RIVER, AND, AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, FIND A CANOE...

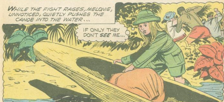


BUT THEIR LUCK TAKES A SUDDEN TURN FOR THE WORSE...




TRY AND STOP US!


ANOTHER NATIVE APPEARS, AND THE KIDNAPPERS HAVE THEIR HANDS FULL!


WHILE THE FIGHT RAGES, MELONIE, UNNOTICED, QUIETLY PUSHES THE CANOE INTO THE WATER...
IF ONLY THEY DON'T SEE ME...


HEY! SHE'S GETTING AWAY!!


GONE!
I KNEW I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LISTENED TO YOU! IT WAS A HAIRBRAINED IDEA FROM THE START!

MOMENTS LATER, THE PHANTOM ARRIVES TO FIND THE TWO MEN IN THE HANDS OF THE BANDAR, THE PYGMY POISON PEOPLE...

A THOUSAND POISON ARROWS ARE POINTED AT YOU, GENTLEMEN! ONLY MY PRESENCE IS KEEPING YOU ALIVE! WHY WERE YOU IN THE JUNGLE WITH A YOUNG CHILD?

OUT WITH IT!

THEY QUICKLY CONFESS THE KIDNAPPING...

YOU KIDNAPPED KING SUROBI'S DAUGHTER, MELONIE?! WHERE IS SHE?

SHE ESCAPED! ...TOOK THE CANOE DOWN THE RIVER!

KEEP THESE MEN PRISONER UNTIL I RETURN! I'LL HAND THEM OVER TO THE PROPER AUTHORITIES, THEN!

YES, O' GHOST WHO WALKS!

I WOULDN'T ADVISE TRYING TO ESCAPE, GENTLEMEN... THOSE POISON ARROWS KILL IN SECONDS!

I'VE GOT TO FIND MELONIE! KING SAROBI IS A FRIEND OF MINE! I REMEMBER HER WHEN SHE WAS ONLY A BABY!

MILES AHEAD, MELONIE DRIFTS IN THE CANOE... IN HER HASTE TO ESCAPE, SHE HAS LEFT THE PADDLE ON SHORE...

I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M GOING, BUT ANYTHING IS BETTER THAN BEING WITH THOSE **AWFUL** MEN!










WHILE THE PHANTOM SEARCHES THE RIVER BANK...


MELONIE IS TAKEN TO THE CHIEF OF THE SINKU TRIBE... A REBEL BAND OF NATIVE OUTLAWS...


THE CHIEF SPEAKS...
JUNGLE DRUMS TELL ME THIS IS THE DAUGHTER OF KING SUROBI OF KABORA! SHE WAS KIDNAPPED BY TWO MEN WHO HAVE SINCE BEEN CAPTURED!


NOW THE RANSOM WILL BE OURS!


THERE'S THE CANOE! MELONIE WENT ASHORE HERE!


THE SINKU TRIBE! THOSE OUTLAW REBELS MUST HAVE THE GIRL!


I MUST MOVE SILENTLY! KNOWING THEM, THEY'LL TRY TO COLLECT THE RANSOM! THEY'RE A TRICKY, EVIL BUNCH... OUTCASTS FROM THEIR OWN TRIBE!


TAKE THIS MESSAGE TO KING SUROBI! IF YOU FAIL, YOU *DIE!*


CHIEF! GIRL WAS FOLLOWED BY GHOST WHO WALKS!
THE PHANTOM! THEY SAY HE *NEVER DIES!* NOW WE SHALL SEE!


THE GHOST WHO WALKS SHALL WALK NO MORE!
WHAT?

TAKE HIM TO THE BLACK WHIRLPOOL!

EVEN *WITHOUT* A NET, NO ONE CAN SURVIVE SUCH RAGING WATERS!

MY FATHER'S KNIFE...IF ONLY I CAN REACH IT...

AIR! I NEED AIR! MY LUNGS ARE BURSTING!

THE PHANTOM IS DEAD! NOW THE SINKU TRIBE WILL RULE THE JUNGLE! BUT *FIRST,* WE NEED THE RANSOM!


BUT THE PHANTOM IS NOT DEAD! WITH THE STRENGTH OF TEN MEN, HE FIGHTS HIS WAY TO THE SURFACE THROUGH THE ANGRY WHIRLPOOL...

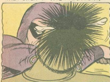

...AND CLINGS TO A ROCK TO CATCH HIS BREATH!


WHILE THE SINKU DANCE IN CELEBRATION OF THE DEATH OF THE PHANTOM!


SUDDENLY, THE DANCE STOPS AS THE NATIVES SENSE AN EERIE, UNKNOWN PRESENCE...
SOMEONE WATCHING!
WHO COULD IT BE?


THE LEGEND OF THE GHOST WHO WALKS IS BROUGHT HOME TO THEM AGAIN, AS THE PHANTOM STEPS FROM THE JUNGLE. THE NATIVES RUN IN PANIC, IGNORING THEIR CHIEF'S ORDERS! THE SIGHT OF THE PHANTOM IS ENOUGH!
STOP! COME BACK!
AIEEE! HE LIVES!!
I TOLD YOU HE COULD NOT DIE!


MOMENTS LATER, ONLY THE PHANTOM AND THE CHIEF REMAIN IN THE CAMP...
LOOKS LIKE IT'S JUST YOU AND ME, CHIEF!
OTHERS COWARDS! CHIEF NOT AFRAID...


THE CHIEF, THOUGH A HARDENED JUNGLE FIGHTER, IS NO MATCH FOR THE POWER OF THE PHANTOM!


"WHEN THE PHANTOM IS ANGRY, HIS BLOWS SOUND LIKE THUNDER!" ...OLD JUNGLE SAYING.


PHANTOM... MY FATHER HAS TOLD ME MANY STORIES OF YOU! I-- I DIDN'T BELIEVE YOU WERE REAL!
YES, I'M REAL, MELONIE! I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOUR FATHER AGAIN! HE IS A GREAT MAN!


WE'VE A LONG TRIP AHEAD OF US, MELONIE! MANY DANGERS AWAIT US!
I'M NOT AFRAID, PHANTOM... AS LONG AS I'M WITH YOU!
CONTINUED...

NOW GET YOUR FAVORITE KING COMICS EVERY MONTH!



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THE PHANTOM

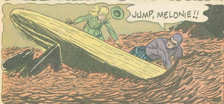
THE STORY OF HERO PART TWO

The LONG TRIP HOME




SOON YOU'LL HAVE A HAPPY REUNION WITH YOUR FATHER, MELONIE!


WE'RE RUNNING INTO RAPIDS! HANG ON TIGHT, MELONIE!


JUMP, MELONIE!!




LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO GO THE REST OF THE WAY ON FOOT! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES, I'M OKAY!


WHILE MELONIE AND THE PHANTOM MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE JUNGLE...


...KING SUROBI IS ORDERING HIS SOLDIERS TO COMB THE TERRITORY FOR THE KIDNAPPERS!
DON'T COME BACK UNTIL YOU'VE FOUND THEM! ...ALIVE OR DEAD!
YES, YOUR HIGHNESS!


THE ARMY FANS OUT INTO THE JUNGLE... DETERMINED TO SEARCH EVERY SQUARE INCH OF IT...


THE NEXT DAY...
THERE SHE IS!
GIVE ME THOSE GLASSES!


THAT MAN... HE MUST BE ONE OF THE KIDNAPPERS!




DOWN, MELONIE!


YOU **FOOL!** HOLD YOUR FIRE! YOU MIGHT HIT THE GIRL!


YOUR FATHER'S TROOPS! THEY THINK I'M ONE OF THE KIDNAPPERS! STAY LOW, MELONIE! I'LL DRAW THEIR FIRE AWAY FROM YOU!


SWIFTLY, THE PHANTOM LEAPS FROM ROCK TO ROCK ...WITH THE SPEED OF A COUGAR...


HE'S TRYING TO GET AWAY! **FIRE!**


WITH KEEN JUNGLE INSTINCT, THE PHANTOM WORKS HIS WAY BEHIND THE SOLDIERS...
WHERE IS HE?
I DON'T KNOW!


HOLD YOUR FIRE... I'M A FRIEND!


SUDDENLY...


KIDNAPPER! NOW WE'VE GOT YOU! YOU'LL DIE FOR THIS!
BUT... I...


DON'T SHOOT!
MELONIE!



A DAY'S JOURNEY LATER, THEY REACH THE KINGDOM OF KABORA...

HOME AT LAST, MELONIE!

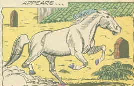
MY FATHER! HE MUST BE SO WORRIED!


A JOYOUS RECEPTION AWAITS THEM, AS TRUMPETS HERALD THEIR ARRIVAL...
FATHER! FATHER!
MELONIE!


THE PHANTOM! MY FRIEND! ONCE YOU SAVED MY LIFE! NOW, YOU HAVE SAVED MY DAUGHTER! I MUST REWARD YOU! ANYTHING I HAVE IS YOURS!
MY REWARD IS THE HAPPINESS I SEE IN YOUR FACE, KING SUROBI!


BUT YOU MUST ACCEPT SOME GIFT!
AAAHHHEEE!


A JACKAL! IT'S ATTACKING ONE OF THE GUARDS!


SUDDENLY, AS IF FROM OUT OF THE AIR... A MAJESTIC WHITE HORSE APPEARS...


THE JACKAL STOPS SHORT, AS HE REALIZES HE MUST FACE THIS NEW ENEMY...


HE LEAPS FOR THE HORSE'S THROAT...

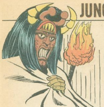

...BUT, TOO LATE!


THE JACKAL IS NO MATCH FOR THE POWERFUL WHITE HORSE!


AFTER THE BATTLE IS WON, THE WHITE HORSE GENTLY NUDGES THE GUARD TO SEE IF HE'S UNHURT!

THAT HORSE! I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE HIM!
HE IS MY PRIZED POSSESSION! THE FINEST HORSE OF THE CENTURY! HE SHOULD BELONG TO A MAN LIKE YOU, PHANTOM! TAKE HIM, HE'S YOURS! IT'S THE *LEAST* I CAN DO!
THEN SOMETHING STRANGE HAPPENS... THE WHITE HORSE COMES TO THE PHANTOM AS IF FATE HAD BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER...
I DON'T THINK HE'LL LET YOU LEAVE *WITHOUT* HIM! HE SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN A FANCY TO YOU!
HIS NAME WILL BE *HERO!* HE EARNED IT TODAY! THANK YOU, KING SUROBI! I HOPE, SOON, WE SHALL MEET AGAIN!
HAIL THE PHANTOM!
HAIL HERO!
AND SO, DIANA... THAT IS HOW I FOUND *HERO!* HE'S BEEN MY FRIEND, AND COMPANION EVER SINCE! I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT HIM!

JUNGLE SUPERSTITIONS



Down through the ages, men have been surrounded by terrifying mysteries. In the jungle there still exists belief in the spirits of magic. The savage belief that evil spirits can be brought under control resulted in the native witch doctor.

The witch doctor created thousands of magic practices and superstitions. For example, if you want someone completely under your power, you must first get possession of something that belongs to him; like a lock of hair or a drop of blood. With these it is believed you can decide a man's destiny.

We've all heard of the ancient voodoo rites. It was the practice among many natives to make figures of clay, resembling their enemies. Then, calling them by name, they would thrust pins into the doll, or melt them over fire. This was supposed to cause illness or great pain. Sometimes even death. Does the voodoo doll actually work? We have no proof that it does, and yet, the practice still exists today in remote parts of the world, which would seem to indicate that something is happening or else voodooism would have died out long ago.

If an Australian aborigine wants to bring harm to an enemy, he simply has to find the man's footprint and drive a sharp stone through it to do the job.

When you see movies of savage tribes, you immediately notice their colorful costumes. These costumes are not simply for show. Each item has a purpose. The feathers on the headdress are believed to give the wearer the swiftness of a bird and sharp eyesight. Claws of a lion will bring the courage of the king of the jungle. Elephant tusks are supposed to bring great strength and good memory.

These superstitions also carry over into the food that some natives eat. For example, many natives will not eat deer or rabbit for fear that it will turn them into cowards. The meat of a lion or a tiger will bring a brave heart. But, it also takes a brave heart to hunt one in the first place.

Witch doctors also pretend to be rainmakers. They invented the rain dance in which all of the natives participated. Did the rain always come after a rain dance? Not always; but many times it did, and the witch doctor's prestige increased! A good witch doctor usually looked at the sky for signs of rain before starting one of his rain dances!

Once when crops were bad, a witch doctor convinced his tribe to shape clay into the form of vegetables and plant it in the ground so that real plants would grow. This plan failed miserably and the witch doctor lost face. Or maybe even head!

In some sections of the jungle, a man is given two names: a secret name and a name for everyday use. The secret name was known only to members of the family and never uttered in public, so that if someone wanted to put a curse on the man it would not work because the curse would be on his phony name and not his real one.

Charm words and incantations have been used to summon up the spirits of the dead. These incantations were kept secret and known only to a few. Whether it was rigged or real is impossible to tell. But, many people in modern cities still persist in attending the spiritualistic mediums, palm-readers and fortune tellers.

Many words that we use today began with the witch doctor. The word "charm" is used to describe talismans, amulets, and even mascots. Who has not known a girl who wore a charm bracelet? For that matter, a mascot at a football game is supposed to bring good luck and owes its history to the witch doctor.

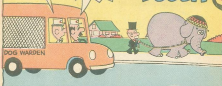
The superstitions of the savage witch doctor still persist today. We who live in the jet age of modern society still cling to the beliefs of the past.

There are people who think a broken mirror will bring bad luck. Rarely do you see a person who will walk under a ladder. Spilling salt is supposed to be bad luck but can be counteracted by throwing some over your shoulder. This brings bad luck to the person sitting behind you. After all, who wants salt thrown all over them?

There are modern buildings that do not have a thirteenth floor! You take the elevator from twelve to fourteen. Many companies refuse to have their offices on the thirteenth floor, so it's been eliminated.

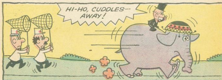
So the witch doctor continues to influence our lives. His power is with us today and will remain as long as there's still a black cat or a rabbit's foot.

MR. ABERNATHY in 500 POUNDS of POOCH



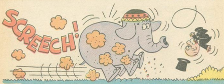







YOU COME BACK!
STOP! STOP IN THE NAME OF THE DOG WARDENS OF AMERICA!


GOOD GOING, CUDDLES. IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE OUTDISTANCED THEM!
CLUMP
CLUMP


SCREECH!


WHY IN THE WORLD DID YOU STOP SO QUICKLY?
BONK!


BONK!
OH, ALL RIGHT, YOU CAN HAVE SOME...


BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO EAT THEM ON THE RUN!
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
PEANUTS


QUICK, CHARLIE! FOLLOW THOSE SHELLS!


ALL THOSE PEANUTS ARE SLOWING YOU DOWN!
PUFF! PUFF!


STOP!
THEY'RE GAINING ON US!


THIS CALLS FOR STRATEGY—PULL OVER TO THAT FOUNTAIN!

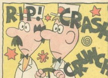

NICE SHOT!
SPLASH


I THINK WE'RE GOING ABOUT THIS ALL WRONG!


I'VE GOT IT! WHAT WE NEED IS THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT!







YOU OWE US $2,000 FOR OUR TRUCK!

WHY DIDN'T I JUST BUY THE TWO DOLLAR LICENSE?

DOG WARDEN